

Plainfield Co-op 2013 Survey results summary

The survey committee met during the first week in August and looked over the results of the most recent survey (June-July, 2013). We received 100 surveys back, 90 via email or online and 10 hard copies from the World insert that cost \$300 and was distributed to over 2400 people in the Plainfield area. With only 10% of our respondents using the insert, we won't spend this kind of money again when there seems to be a much better response via the internet. Lesson learned! 90% of the responses were from members, several were undesignated and 7% were not members.

In general terms, when interpreting the data somewhat broadly, the directives from our respondents (which were less than 1/3 of our members) are focused primarily on several categories. **Providing employees with a livable wage** was the highest priority with 83% of the respondents ranking this as their #1 or #2 priority. Second was the **convenience of the store location** (80% ranked 1 and 2), third was **reducing costs** (75% ranked 1 and 2) and **increasing membership** was the next most important category (67% ranked 1 and 2).

Other relatively high ranking areas were: **expansion (57%) accessibility (55%) and partnerships with other co-ops (44%)**. As a rule people were generally happy with **customer service, hours of operation, checkout accuracy, helpfulness, cleanliness, quality of products and friendliness**. Concern was raised about product selection and continued concern was expressed about prices.

Of most importance with regard to choices people made about the things they chose to buy at the co-op, 86% said that **healthy choices** were their #1 or #2 priority, while **price** was a factor for 81%, **products free of GMOs** was 80% and **organically grown products** were a priority for 75%.

65% of respondents said that they knew how to communicate with the board, although when asked about board "responsiveness" 60% of respondents didn't know whether we were responsive or not, while 27% said that the board was either always or usually responsive to their requests.

Below you will see some of the specifics of the survey, point by point.

1. What is your age?

The average age of the 98 respondents was 51.6, with the youngest being 23 and the oldest being 86

2. Are you a member of the Co-op?

90% of the respondents were members, 7% were not, 3% did not respond

3. Postal code:

64% of respondents were from Plainfield
16% - Marshfield
3.8% - East Calais

One person from Cabot, Middlesex and California
Two people from Barre and East Montpelier

4. Do you shop at the Co-op?

97% of respondents said yes, 2% said no, 1% no response

5. How often do you shop at the Co-op?

The answers here were all over the place, but statistically speaking, the following is approximately the breakdown:

25% - 1x/week
15% - 2x/week
10% - 3x/week
8% - 3x/month
7% - daily
6% - 2x/year
5% - 1x/month

6. If you don't shop at the Co-op, why not?

I DID NOT KNOW THAT OUT OF TOWNERS COULD BE MEMBERS AND I DO NOT KNOW THE HOURS OR WHAT IS OFFERED
Not often because the store lacks variety and smells moldy
prices limited selection small cramped space limited parking
N/A
i shop at Montpelier coo-op for larger selection
price, location out of my way home from work
n/a
prices too high Hunger Mountain in Montpelier is less expensive
I rarely shop at Plainfield -- having gotten in the habit of doing major shopping at Hunger Mt. Coop. If I do shop here it is just to get a few last minute things I forgot and don't want to drive into Montpelier to get. Not sure if I'm still a member since I didn't get any kind of renewal notice after joining at the annual meeting.
Price, I'm somewhere else.

7. What would make your neighbors more likely to shop at the Co-op?

UNKNOWN
Advertising
A bigger, better, cleaner location
more fresh fruit selection
more consistency of products
more convenience and economy - perhaps at the expense of specialty items
n/a
different location lower prices
Red Hen bread..
Bigger selection? You are limited by the size of the store. Your competition is Hunger Mountain, and they offer a lot more.
lower prices
ben and jerry's ice cream
more options, easier access
We live in a part of town where Plainfield village is not on the route into either Montpelier or Barre, so it requires a dedicated trip to town to go there.
If the Co-op donated a percentage of its profits to a charity that I believed in.
lowest prices for best quality, I don't care quite as much about variety, as I do about quality and price of pretty much everything.
Greater selection of fresh produce
More variety
Better selection of fresh produce. Fresh gluten free bread.
More fresh vegetables, lower prices on products
I try to shop there first. Sometimes the prices seem a bit high - but I shop there anyway, b/c I want the Plainfield Food Coop to continue to exist.
longer hours
"conventional" grocery options a bigger produce selection a deli counter
more goat cheese and goat milk more bread deliveries

fresh deli options like better olives and lunch meat that is freshly sliced.
more convenient location, fresher, better looking produce
Lower prices on staple foods, consistent and robust inventory
If it were larger...it just can't compete with Hunger Mountain or a traditional supermarket. And, of course, items are rarely less expensive than conventional food.
more competitive prices with Hunger Mtn.--I find myself going there because it's convenient when I am in Montpelier, there is a big choice, but mainly because the prices are better. But I love our coop and really want to shop there more!
Some things are too expensive. Also, it would be nice if you carried a grain beverage-type coffee replacement. "Beyond Coffee" is a good local one from Maine.
If there were sale items more often.
don't know
lower prices adequate parking better location less feeling of cliques
More stuff...lower prices.Better fruit,..
More produce, especially locally produced produce. Given the choice for produce grown by someone in /near Plainfield I'll almost always take it as encouraging local food sufficiency is very important to me.
More food choices & lower prices
Selection, price, local emphasis. OK in these areas, could do better.
Cost--some things are really quite expensive--even with membership!
offer something that no one else offers! wine on tap? a butcher who custom cuts steaks? A larger selection of Nye's amazing Vietnamese Food?
Keeping the prices competitive to reflect the neighborhood's general incomes.
have reasonably priced staples. I was shock to see you selling the florida orange juice \$2.00 more that at Shaws! We don't want to pay elite only organic prices all the time. Also why can't you provide some fat free yougurt!
if prices were lower, that would influence me. I know I can get certain things less expensively at hunger mountain. I like supporting the co-op, and being a part of it, but the higher prices are a deterrant to doing more of my shopping there.
Greater selection of products.
cheaper prices on staple items like organic peanut butter.
a few more prepared foods, although they would need to be locally made and I'm not sure how realistic this is!
Lower prices
Difficult question, honestly - mostly having to do with price, unfortunately
most staff are great, some have an attitude, or come off more holy than thou.

Similar groceries and prices as Hunger Mt (cereal options, frozen options tandoor chef etc, soy milk options,
I don't know about my neighbors, but I do shop there often.
I am happy with the coop
Less expensive food.
More space and volume of offerings.
More stuff, more stuff at varied prices, including lower price options
lower prices
lower prices!
Clearer understanding of its advantages relative to 'one stop shopping' options like Hunger Mt. For me, that's mainly our more community-centered focus, collective mgmt., and responsiveness to members. But not everyone sees that. We need to be better at communicating our many strengths.
Better off-season veggies (if you even carry them). I bought a cucumber this week that was soft and had to throw half of it out.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fresher milk, i.e., from Stoneyfield or somewhere else that had better dates on it. 2. Being sure you wouldn't be out of things that you usually stock.
I would be more likely to shop at the Co-op if there was a deli. I'm often in town during the day and would be more likely to get lunch at the Co-op.
Locating closer
Wider selection of food products
If it were easier to find.
lower prices, more selection
Bigger selection, lower prices, perhaps if there were more conventional (or at least, not astronomically priced organic/local) options.
Lower prices (which I know is a hard thing to achieve with organic, locally-grown food)
Knowing it is there and open to everyone. Realizing that not everything in the store is expensive or priced out of their range of affordability. It would be nice to think that everyone can afford local and organic, but until clean food becomes a right instead of a privilege, conventional products should be available.
A better selection matching some items I can get at Hunger Mountain but not available in Plainfield. You might pick up more customers by offering a 20% discount on HBA once a week --- I am drawn to HM at least once a week for my HBA needs, and of course buy other things while I'm there.
Are you asking me what I think needs to be improved at the Coop? It's unlikely that I would shop there more than a couple of times per week even if it were perfect in my eyes.
More options
less expensive produce
lower prices more produce selection

Lower prices, I would expect. And a deli of some sort.

If the space was renovated or expanded! At times, it can be crowded in the small space and walking through the isles and checking out becomes uncomfortable and "annoying" actually.

more room/less product distraction at the check out counter, more staff leadership around lengthy conversations that tie up line yet keep social atmosphere in tact

8. Do you think there is a need for a grocery outlet in Plainfield?

88% said yes, 9% said no and 3% did not respond.

9. In an ideal world, what role would you like to see the co-op play in Plainfield?

A wealth of comments, suggestions, validation and reflection below in the 75 comments offered!

A bigger storefront

A broker for local farmers and suppliers of quality foods

an active one

when I hear the words "ideal world" I reach for my - hat anyway. or car keys. We need to stop taking ourselves so seriously, it usually brings trouble and ruthlessness.
One suggestion I would make is fewer surveys. We have more surveys per capita than any other coop and nothing generally comes of it but another survey.

clearinghouse for local producers and healthful suppliers + something of the old general store/community center

just like it is!

an affordable source for products with emphasis on organic and a sizable selection of products with good parking access

More food education and purchase of local produce.
We generally do a good job

Food, primarily.

Be the main place everyone shops

IT'S GREAT NOW.

more of exactly what it is already doing!

meeting place, educational: workshops, etc.

Be the primary food shopping place for Plainfield residents

I have only been living here a short time but it seems like it is doing everything wonderfully

I would hope that the co-op would be my primary source of food (in addition to what I get from the farmers market).

I think it plays an excellent role already. I am extremely impressed with the new trail down to the river. I would like to see it located in a slightly easier location to reach, and I would like to see the coop conduct classes on nutrition.

bulk foods at cheapest prices, distribute more local produce

place for fresh, local foods

I think the coop is playing its most appropriate role. I don't think the coop should over-reach.

I would love it if people would come to Plainfield to do their shopping, people who normally drive all the way to Montpelier.

I think it is perfect the way it is, but if the above could be added then I would never go to Hunger Mtn

expand, better produce, more meats, cheeses

if the barre co-operative is up and running, maybe joining forces to save ordering costs, etc.

providing food

A vibrant heart of the community, welcoming to all residents, not just the "hippie" crowd :)

It's really great right as a member of this community, with the space to rent etc

I think it's doing just fine...perhaps more collaboration with, oh, the health center or libraries in the area with classes...

Pretty much as it is now--grocery store, center for seeing folks you know, and occasional activities to gather the members together.

Getting us good food from local farmers in a shopping environment that is family friendly (we adore the kids area you have). It is a meeting place for friends and neighbors to connect, especially in the winter when we're all more isolated.

bigger presence in Plainfield; more stuff

??

not really essential as most, including me, travel to Barre or Montpelier frequently

Fulfill all my grocery needs, or more of them,..

Stay the same, just add more products

Food store?

A coop that would have more to offer to lure me away from Montpelier's Hunger Mt. Habits are hard to break and every time I've shopped at Plainfield I've not found what I've wanted. But certainly it would be more energy efficient to go to Plainfield from E. Calais than to Montpelier.

Where I go to get most of my groceries as needed; I go to Tim's for things I would rather go to the Co-op for since I am on a tight food budget.

I love the Plainfield Co-op. I think you have a good selection and actually prefer the options you offer to some of the bigger coops. I like that the store is an accessible scale, with options but not too many options. I sometimes feel lost and overwhelmed in bigger coops or health food stores because it feels very product oriented. Stick to basic

I'd love to see it expand to a real grocery store that had more options. Less expensive vegetables and fruits. I'd love to see the store move up to the old Red Store's location. Thus creating a drive-by, drop-in country/coop/store.

neighborhood grocery
I think the co-op fills an important place now, in being an alternative grocery store. but, I suppose ideally if there were more choices, and the co-op could provide competitive prices, and have more of a selection, that would be good. I'm not sure if that is really possible, tho, given the size and customer base.
A good place to shop for a wide variety of foods.
A gathering place, not unlike Hunger Mountain, where we are also members.
A food cooperative in more than ownership.
In the ideal world, its volume could increase so the prices might be able to come down some.
it would be nice to see more low income people served by co-op, these people often have poorest diet. i think the co op does a good job of building community, perhaps they could encourage/manage a community garden(not sure if this exists in area or not)
The coop would be my main place to shop. But it is not. It doesn't offer all the things I use regularly and often it doesn't offer the best price. However, I love that it is so close to where I live and I try to buy everything I can there.
its present form
Provide quality affordable food, place for local. Folks to sell their foods, communiyy space and business that hires local folks.
A supplier of good quality, affordable food and other household items (paper products, cleansers, pet food). A place where organic is presumptive, but not necessarily exclusive. Where a vegetarian has variety. Where local growers, bakers, etc. are supported. Where information on good nutrition is provided in an accessible and fun manner.
The local whole foods (not the chain, the whole foods) grocery.
role? food purveyor. supporter of healthy eating families. place to sell food for area farmers (even home gardeners)
Hub of a cooperatively organized food system that meets everyone's needs, plus branching out toward meeting other needs as well: fuel, transportation, other household supplies, etc.
The same as Hunger Mt. for Montpelier.
I love the idea of a riverside cafe of some kind, or a place to sit by the river. The coop is fine with me the way it is. As the population which uses the coop ages, if it's aging, a delivery service might be excellent.
Ideally, I would like the co-op to be a little larger because I think it could then meet the needs of Plainfield better, which would include a deli and a salad bar. I do know that's probably not feasible given the current location and funding.
Continued hub for neighborhood support, bulletin board news, outlet for local food producers
As the primary food store for Plainfield and area residents. This would require expansion at a different location - perhaps to Peter Young's new property on Route 2.
Quality healthy food in a community environment.
A grocery store/resource for the whole community.
Larger role
Having it so we can buy most of our groceries locally.

Source of affordable, healthy food
Continue as local grocery & work to increase sales so that the store has more buying power. Be a source of information in the community about food & agricultural issues. Advocate for food choices for everyone.
APPEAL TO MORE PEOPLE- READY MADE FOOD WAS A NICE FEATURE FOR AWHILE
Expanded grocery store
A more promotional presence to draw more people in --- I think your biggest competition is Hunger Mountain, with an understandably larger selection.
bigger space, more food
Be a hub where LOCAL foods and other goods could be sold. Local being Marshfield, Cabot, Plainfield, Orange maybe, East Montpelier
Local food, community center
be more visible on the street.
Neon sign on RT2???
I'd like to see lower-income families served more completely. I want to know that my neighbors enjoy the co-op as much as I do.
Supporting and offering more local produce and products, which you already do. Perhaps more "events" like cooking classes or information on plants and food.
A place to buy locally grown healthy food
continue the development of it's already successful role

10. Would you like to see a more streamlined process for bulk ordering?

34% said yes and 34% said no, the rest did not respond.

11. If so what kinds of products would you be likely to order?

(I DO NOT KNOW CURRENT PROCESS) OATMEAL, UNREFINED SUGAR, BEANS, OIL
dried fruits
would like bulk section for peanut butters - we go to Montpelier coop for that and then end up getting other stuff there
coffee, granola, beans, canned goods, rice, salsa, chips
grains, soaps, oils, nuts, meat shares would be cool too.
not sure
brown rice, oat bran, green lentils, green split peas
I go to the coop because I am not the kind of person who can think ahead to order in bulk, even though I do buy particular items regularly. I would prefer if the prices were low, I would shop there more often and buy

more.
I would like to see salted brazil nuts
We are interested in bulk ordering but are unfamiliar with the current process.
Nuts, flour, oats,
everything except fresh produce
N/A
staples
I didn't know that the coop was doing bulk ordering. I'll have to check on that next time I come in.
I don't know anything about it, have never done it
don't really order bulk
oats, buckwheat flour, cornmeal
Honey (15-30 #/order), tea (2-3 #/order), unroasted coffee beans (5 #/order).
fresh deli items more choices all over similar too a larger coop or food outlet
If I were to order bulk we order bulk veggie juice, sardines, kippers and I'm thinking of ordering flour from Butterworks etc.
baking goods, spices, some bulk goods, cheese(?)
freezer options: dumplings, pasta, veggies or fruit. off the shelf items: beans, soups, cereal meat: chicken, lamb, beef, etc. (although I do like getting that stuff directly from neighbors and local farmers).
orange juice
og brown rice
I really can't comment, and didn't want to say "yes" to #10 as I've never tried bulk ordering at Plainfield Co-op. I would probably order bulk herbs, if available.
Nut butters.
hickory smoked tempeh; and soybeans!! I was flabbergasted recently when looking for soybeans - plain, old, basic, soybeans - and the Plainfield Coop didn't have them. Really. If the Plainfield Coop stands for anything, it should soybeans!
We don't order bulk now, would like to know more about it -- maybe some really clear info right up front in the entryway?
don't know enough about it to say (in other words question #10 should have a "don't know" answer too. bulk ordering would be great though!
no idea; my storage space is limited so I don't really do preorders.

I don't bulk order foods
frozen foods
I haven't used bulk buying since getting brewing supplies through Huger MT 30 years ago. And before that cheese and flour at the breakdowns at the UU church in the 70's.
As the world changes bulk buying may become an issue as transportation costs increase and reliability decreases.
Lots of things
Soy milk
Various. What sorts of things might be available?
I'm not a consistent buyer of bulk products, so my opinion is of little value.
rice, oats, grains, beans
Peanut butter, graham crackers, and cut meat.
Grains, nuts, canned goods, juice
organic items, no-gmo project labeled items

12 If you are not a working member, what prevents you from working more?

JOINING, HOURS AVAILABLE WHEN I AM CHILD FREE	
Distance to store	
Bills and the need for a regular salary to live on	
time	
time	
don't live here	
I would rather pay the extra charge. The huge coop in Park Slope Brooklyn requires work	
Other time commitments.	
Lack of time	
Lack of time	
Rather not.	
I have not been asked to work and wouldn't know how to start.	
Single mom, full-time job - not enough time.	
I work full-time. To work also at the Co-op, even one or two hours a week, would be stretching myself too thin.	
time	

To long of a commitment required. Was told it was six months
no time
Time
Availability around regular job.
Hard to find the time
not interested
N/A
i do alot of volunteering with other organizations, Ellen made working at co-op very comfortable
other time obligations
I think I'm too busy.
I am intimidated by the people who work at the co-op
doesn't seem worth it as I work enough already
I am not currently a member and live near by. We currently have very busy work schedules and cant seem to squeeze in the extra time.
working full-time and taking care of aging parents.
too much going on in my life
WAY too busy to add yet another commitment to my schedule
job is far away
Habit, I guess. I got burned out on co-op work when I was in college; however, I did start working at City Market when I lived in Burlington.
Transportation
too busy
don't work any, so wouldn't work more don't want to spend the time and the discount doesn't amount to enough to make it worth it
Time
Currently a working member at HM but will likely switch to working at Plainfield when my term is up in the fall.
I forget to sign up as I travel frequently
Don't have the time.
time -- I take care of my 95 yr. old mother and am just getting acclimated to this place.
Time and the value of my time vs the discount I would receive.

I work full-time and am active in the community. Too hard to fit in one more thing right now. I would consider working if I can take something else off my plate.

Working a day job and taking care of the Farm's chores.

my job and time for other interests!

too busy with job

I worked for a while last year packing cheese, but really wanted to be "on the floor," and would probably want to work in the herb section if I work.

Dollars earned not worth the time spent.

my schedule is often decided a day or two before. it seems that this co op has a rigid structure for workers. buffalo mtn co op seemingly has a more flexible volunteer structure.

Time and interest

My work schedule

I do not have the time. I was considering it, though and signed up when I renewed my membership to receive more information or to be contacted. I never heard from anyone, but since I don't really have extra time, I didn't pursue it.

time

Not sure what jobs are . Not in my calendar . Lazy :)

Time and age. I used to work regularly, but don't have the time or energy. I'm happy that we support working members, and am equally happy to pay more because I can't.

Time

personal time needs

my day job on top of raising a young child on top of helping to run our farm on top of everything else. not enough hrs in my day!

Too many other commitments + only getting to Plainfield sporadically.

Time

I am busy. I don't have any desire to work at the coop

Don't have the time.

not in Plainfield, but would be happy to help

I haven't had time. However, I will in the near future.

Now that I am retired I can't imagine how I ever had time for work. A couple hours a week would be 100 hrs per year. I would rather pay a few percent more for the same food and have the time.

Other priorities.

I don't know

Time.
The time demands of my job.
Working to pay my bills.
THE TIME SPENT WORKING DOES NOT SIGNIFICANTLY BALANCE OUT WITH PERCENTAGE OFF MY GROCERIES
Other commitments
I do the best I can.
full time jobs
I'm very busy.
I work too much already
I work full time - no more time, energy
already spent many years packing rasins, cheese etc, pricing items, taking out garbage, being on board. enough.
I have a full-time job and a kid and some civic obligations.
I do not have the time during the work week and on the weekend I prefer to enjoy my time off, as I work with middle schoolers and this is a touch age group.

21. Other comments – see below

WE AND 11 PEOPLE IN OUR FAMILY. LARGE QUANTITIES WITH NOT MUCH PACKAGING IS IMPORTANT. (WE GROW OUR OWN MEAT)	
The produce quality is poor and the unusual smell - old mold - is off-putting. Food at the counter displayed in unsanitary manner.	
gluten-free, lactose free (dietary restrictions)	
Vegetarianism is not a "restricted diet." It is a wonderful lifestyle!!	
Sometimes it's frustrating when products are not available - it sends us to Montpelier Coop because they more reliably have products. Unsliced bread is one example - never know if PC will have it.	
I count on the coop for good basic food and foodstuffs. I prefer to buy locally produced food but take price into consideration as well. It is helpful to me when I can "stock up" on basic items and, hopefully, reduce my shopping trips.	
I love the Coop and come every time I'm in town (@Goddard)	
expect that sentimentality over long history at this site and this size and image as "hippest" will sway decisions about future	
We occasionally shop at Plainfield Coop when convenient - sometimes when shopping at the Farmers Market or running errands to Plainfield Hardware. The problem we have living here in East Calais is that we frequently run errands in Montpelier making Hunger Mt. Coop more convenient (though further from us than	

Plainfield Coop - 15 miles vs. 8 miles). Hunger Mt. also has a much larger selection of items to choose from making it our preferred shopping destination. Nevertheless, we do appreciate the benefits of the Plainfield Coop to the Plainfield-Marshfield community!

My main priority for the coop is reliability - it used to be that I could not depend upon the coop to always be stocked with the basics but staff has done a good job at addressing these issues. This has allowed me to become a more consistent shopper, and I always enjoy the variety and availability of local goods.

I LOVE the Co-op!

And here are a couple of suggestions/requests:

1. Stop displaying Vic's free samples--often loaded with sugar--at kids-eye level on the little counter to the left of the bulk items. To me, this is a disservice to children, and also to the parents of children who are trying to encourage healthful eating habits in them. If we do have free samples, choose healthful samples, such as carrot sticks and hummus. Sugar has been linked with soooo many diseases! So let's just say no to free samples (even if they are home-made) of food that is loaded with sugar and carbs.

2. Provide a brand of almond butter (in the jar) that does not contain cane sugar and palm oil.

Occasionally people working there stink like body odor and they really need to shower and or use deodorant, sometimes it's working members. Because it's a food store there needs to be a policy of cleanliness when people work. It's gross to buy food when someone around you stinks. I'm not trying to be unkind, it's just the truth. There are natural deodorants, soaps and shampoos that work excellent and the coop sells them. (Thanks, I've been wanting to vent that for some time!)

We haven't done bulk ordering with you yet, but are interested in it.

I like to purchase locally produced products, whether or not they are organic. We live in an exciting food area, and it would be good to learn about new local farms/food suppliers as they start up.

I am extremely impressed with the coop's organization and cleanliness. Staff is helpful, although sometimes they get a bit too chatty with their friends - but I only feel that way when I'm in a hurry. :-)

my "no" regarding customer service is related to the lack of name tags and my "no" for quality of products in the produce selection and quality of the fruit at times

Please organic cucumbers, that would be great!

Imagine due to longevity of existence of "hippy" nature of original and carry over members that there will be a strong desire to continue the Co- op as is forever and to think that it needs to be in Plainfield right where it is now.

In truth, the location stinks, parking sucks, most people travel outside of Plainfield for various reasons which make shopping for food at other locations not a big issue.

And already noted, Hunger Mt in Montpelier has less expensive items -- anywhere from 10. cents to 50 to 65 and 70 cents, and even a dollar plus less than at the Plainfield Co-op.

Products are basic, would like more choices but I am grateful for what we have.

Again, would just like to see more selection/choices

lucy.blue@yahoo.com

I really love the size of the Plainfield co-op. while you don't offer as many options as some of the bigger stores, you still seem to be able to give people choices. I am willing to pay more to have a co-op right in town. I know I can stop on my way home and pick up grocery items for a great dinner any day of the week. Thank you!

Sourcing locally whenever possible is important to me. I like that you make an effort to do this, even if it sometimes means having a more limited selection. Organic is good, but not as important to me as supporting a local economy.

If you were to expand, I would not want to see more products, but rather some unique offerings that don't exist right now. For example, a butcher who custom cuts meats. Maybe they would only be there once or twice a week, but it would be exciting. I also like the idea of offering some prepared foods, but something special...like vietnamese take-out dinners!

I appreciate the selection of local produce and do come to the coop for that; also appreciate the bulk section.
I like the discounted produce....!
it would be great to have increased ready to eat food options, and also increased frozen food options.
I love the "treats" by Nga (not sure how to spell her name). her food is great!

Thanks for all the hard work you all do.

I am far from being a food purist, so price is a factor to me - i do try to eat reasonably healthy, however.

This is a GREAT coop, best Ive been in yet. Bless all of you who make it possible.

I get frustrated when I count on getting something, like local beef/poultry, and then it is out of stock when I arrive to buy it. It is especially frustrating when I purposely plan to buy these things at the coop, so that I support the coop, and then can't find the it there. Is there any way to order enough of these items each week so that customers can count on buying those things at the coop?
What happens, after not being able to find what I want more than once, is that I get it somewhere else and don't spend my money at the coop, which seems too bad.

y'all are using terms and not defining them..."livable wage" "fair trade"...all catch alls that mean different things to different people...makes this hard to respond to. For example, there is no universally accepted definition of fair trade but it's often referred to in international trade so... frankly, I'd rather my products come to me from local places. I do love my coffee and olive oil so yes, I want that fairly traded but honestly I don't know exactly what that means. If the fair trade label isn't slapped on my product, is that mean it was traded unfairly? On the livable wage issue, if that means a salary that supports basic needs, I say, can't we do better than basic needs? How bout a salary that helps folks put some money away for later on in life? Sorry to be difficult here but you used those over used terms that most people don't really know what they mean.

many of the choices in 19 and 20 above are not directly comparable to each other. wish these had been 'rank each item on a scale of 1-5' questions instead. I'd have been able to give more meaningful responses.

I didn't even know you had bulk orders nor have I seen anything posted that said you take bulk orders.

Some of these questions should have had some other choices besides yes and no.

The survey instrument can't count. It was rejecting my submission for exceeding the number of characters available while the display said I had 7 characters left in item 15 above. So I deleted part of my comments.

Lately a second loaf of Manghis wholewheat bread has been delivered (four extra loaves per week). That is a great improvement. Now there is about a 50% chance that I will be able to get one loaf per week at the Coop. A couple times each month I need to get a loaf at the bakery or at Hunger Mt. But I travel to Montpelier almost every day.

Love this Co-op

I realize how food costs have gone up astronomically in the last few years, and I recognize the importance of local/organic. But when a particular item costs two to four times its conventional (or, in some cases, organic/natural but not local) counterpart, that's prohibitive. I don't think it's the co-op's fault for these prices, but there needs to be more balance. There are many people on budgets who buy local/organic when they can afford it, and try very hard not to buy any of the processed crap one sees in Shaw's, but still go to the supermarket, because they can get natural products that, although not always local or organic, are still more affordable than 13 dollar sausage or a 6 dollar bag of chips. Not everyone has a trust fund.

This puts the co-op in a difficult position, but it's very much the reality of the situation for many of us. Hunger Mtn. feels like a designer specialty food place. Although I'm hardly a purist, I don't want to see the PC go more in that direction.

It does not make me happy to be forced to choose between several factors that are important to me in order to fit your rating scheme, and so I have not done so. This kind of thing is typical of the way dominant culture requires us to choose between things that are of equal importance in our lives.

I have to say that after filling this survey out, I have no idea how this information will be useful. It seems very disconnected from the membership and community. Where did these questions come from? What is the point of this questionnaire? I have to ask if anybody is happy with the price they are paying for food anywhere? Why single out the coop for this question?

Perhaps it would have been more useful to have invited a focus group of coop & community members to meet and discuss the coop's place in the community before coming up with the questionnaire.

At any rate, I thank you for this opportunity to give some feedback and I hope you will find some use in my responses.

DAILY OR WEEKLY SAMPLE OF ONE DISH MEALS USING ONLY CO-OP ITEMS-
SEASONAL FOODS
MENU IDEAS ATTACHED TO SPECIALS OR SEASONAL MENU IDEAS

number 16 would be better answered w/a scale of 1-5